

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, January 5, 2015, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the COR Conference Room at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Thomas Stodola  
                          Board Member Bob Bentz (arrived at 6:36 p.m.)  
                          Board Member Reid Bernard  
                          Board Member Michael Hiatt  
                          Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent:     Board Member Larry Lewis  
                          Board Member Tara Prendergast

Also Present:         City Planner Chris Anderson  
                          Council Liaison John LeTourneau

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Stodola called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Valentine to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Hiatt, Valentine, and Bernard.  
Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Bentz, Lewis, and Prendergast.

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated December 1, 2014**

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to approve the regular meeting minutes dated December 1, 2014.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Bernard, Hiatt, and Valentine.  
Voting No: None. Absent: Board Members Bentz, Lewis, and Prendergast.

## **5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Review of Draft Statement of Purpose and Scope of Work**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Bentz arrived at 6:36 p.m.

City Planner Anderson reviewed the Draft Statement of Purpose and provided example items that would be reviewed by the Board through the process proposed, under the existing framework. He explained that a land use application could be brought forward before the EPB prior to the review by the Planning Commission, with the recommendations from those Boards moving forward to the City Council. He stated that the intent is to move forward with this process for the review of land use applications for a one-year period, noting that a review would then be completed to determine if any amendments are necessary before formalizing this process. He advised that the EPB would also be involved with the Comprehensive Plan, education, emerging issues, and review of the Zoning Code. He stated that this process will make the Board more proactive and able to provide additional input. He explained that this Statement of Purpose and duties had been composed based on the input received at the previous meeting and asked for feedback.

Board Member Hiatt questioned if the Board schedule would interfere with the 60-day review deadline for land use applications.

City Planner Anderson explained that land use applications are required 30 days before the next Planning Commission meeting, which would ensure that the Board would meet prior to the scheduled Planning Commission meeting. He noted that staff thoroughly discussed that aspect to ensure that the actions could occur within the review period.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he appreciates the ability to be involved in the review process and simply wanted to ensure that this review opportunity would not interfere with the review timeline for applicants.

City Planner Anderson noted that the Board would review and provide feedback on natural resource aspects of applications.

Board Member Valentine commended staff for the creation of the document and also appreciated the ability to be more involved.

City Planner Anderson explained that this document is meant to clarify how the Board serves the community and to provide a framework for the intent and responsibility of the Board. He encouraged all the Board Members to attend the future City Council Work Session at which this information will be presented and discussed.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Bernard to forward the Draft Statement of Purpose to a future City Council Work Session for review with the City Council.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Bernard, Bentz, and Hiatt. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Members Lewis and Prendergast.

**5.02: Review Draft Closed Landfill Land Use Plan; Case of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He reviewed the land use case, specifically in regard to the ground water area of concern identified by the MPCA and to the oak savanna. He recommended that the Board support the MPCA's desire to provide permanent protection and restoration efforts to the oak savanna on the western portion of the lot.

City Councilmember LeTourneau stated that the Board should also consider if preservation of the oak savanna would interfere with the concept of a business park and increased tax base for the City.

City Planner Anderson provided additional input, identifying the oak savanna on the concept plan, which is shown as open space. He noted that the opinion of this Board may not match the opinions of the Economic Development Authority and the Planning Commission. He advised that all the comments will then be provided to the MPCA as feedback.

Chairperson Stodola questioned the current zoning of the area. He stated that it seemed to him that if business was going to exist in that area it would be along the roadway and identified an area that is very wet on that site. He stated that the wetland could not be filled, so in essence that makes the area in discussion very small.

City Councilmember LeTourneau explained that he views the area as a larger area that needs to be platted. He noted that hypothetically the wetland could be filled as well, if wetland credits are purchased to offset that.

Board Member Hiatt questioned if there is demand for business park area within Ramsey.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that business park is in high demand within Ramsey as there are businesses that would like to come to the City and those within Ramsey that would like to expand. He stated that this area is currently zoned E-1, which is one of the two employment districts within Ramsey.

Board Member Bentz stated that in his experience previous land use sites are not found desirable by businesses. He stated that even though the site would be monitored there is still the risk of what is not yet known.

Board Member Valentine stated that he believes the MPCA makes the distinction between properties that will be serviced by City sewer and water and those that have their own wells. He stated that the oak savanna is a high quality aspect in an area that may not be attractive for future development and therefore would support the preservation of the oak savanna. He agreed that the remaining area should be made available for development, noting that potential businesses should be alerted to the previous use.

Board Member Bentz stated that he would prioritize the available land for business use. He stated that perhaps industrial manufacturers would not be as concerned with the risk because they also generate waste.

Board Member Hiatt stated that perhaps the oak savanna could be preserved on that portion of the site with a business park developed on the other portion of the site.

City Councilmember LeTourneau confirmed that could be done. He stated that the current business park being developed is 93 acres. He stated that the challenge currently is that the desire is for some of the larger scale tracts of business park development.

City Planner Anderson stated that the responsibility of the Board is to review applications relating to natural resources. He stated that this is a unique ecotype that could accommodate preservation of the oak savanna while still allowing for future development on the larger site. He acknowledged the well thought out statements from the Board regarding potential contamination concerns from prospective business owners.

City Councilmember LeTourneau stated that he would agree with the desire to preserve the oak savanna, noting that in terms of development the site would be low priority.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to recommend to the MPCA that the City will commit to preserving the oak savanna in return for the City being allowed to pursue commercial development on the eastern portion of the site, contingent upon the City providing municipal services to avoid the use of ground water.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Hiatt, Bentz and Bernard. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Lewis and Prendergast.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that the oak savanna is high quality but has not been maintained and described some of the maintenance activities being discussed for the area.

### **5.03: Consider Potential Recycling Activities/Opportunities**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report and reviewed the potential recycling events currently being considered that would qualify for Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) funding. He asked for feedback from the Board, including any additional recycling ideas. He stated that the funding request must be submit to the County by the end of February, noting that the Board could continue to think about ideas and provide that input at the February Board meeting.

Chairperson Stodola stated that he would be in favor of a zero waste Happy Days event, as that would not only be a recycling event but also an educational opportunity.

City Planner Anderson stated that the public works staff has received many positive comments acknowledging the opportunity to recycle at Happy Days the past few years.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he would support the promotion of apartment complex recycling event as apartment complexes have the lowest rate of recycling currently. He stated would

provide an educational aspect that could increase the recycling participation of that portion of the community.

City Councilmember LeTourneau noted that would also be a service provided by the City to those residents.

Board Member Bentz stated that perhaps businesses could be targeted for recycling as well.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that would be beneficial as well but would not count against the tonnage thresholds of the City.

Board Member Hiatt stated that perhaps recognition could be provided to businesses that increase their recycling efforts, noting that would reward businesses with positive promotion for their efforts.

Board Member Bentz stated that he would like to see recycling bins outside of gas stations.

City Planner Anderson stated that staff can investigate that option for on the go recycling if there is a gas station within the City that would like to pursue that opportunity. He noted that he can also investigate a program that could recognize businesses that increase their recycling efforts.

City Councilmember LeTourneau stated that if the efforts were increased the news story could move beyond a local story to a regional story.

City Planner Anderson stated that the County does recognize businesses for recycling and advised that the Board could make a recommendation should a local business standout.

Board Member Bentz stated that perhaps household chemicals could be collected as well during recycling events.

City Planner Anderson stated that he could investigate that option but stated that it is a very rigorous process because of the transportation of hazardous waste, which is why the regional household hazardous waste facility was created. He noted that the County does have a traveling program. He stated that perhaps the City could coordinate with the County to create a site in Ramsey that could be used for a one-day event.

## **6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT**

Board Member Bentz referenced the painting program that has started and asked for additional information.

City Planner Anderson explained that there is a paint care stewardship program that took effect November 1<sup>st</sup> in Minnesota, noting that Sherwin Williams and Hirshfield's are participating. He explained that unused paint can be returned to these stores for disposal, noting that there are some limitations on the amount that can be brought in at one time. He stated that he will advertise that item in an upcoming newsletter.

City Councilmember LeTourneau stated that Commission appointments are completed annually at this time of year. He stated that he would like to continue as the Council Liaison to this Board but was unsure which designation would be made.

The Board thanked City Councilmember LeTourneau for his efforts and attendance over the past year.

City Planner Anderson stated that this Friday night is the annual appreciation and holiday party event. He also asked the opinion of the Board in terms of utilizing the third Monday of the month for monthly meetings rather than the first Monday of the month because of staffing conflicts. He stated that this would not interfere with the 60-review period for land use applications. He clarified that moving to the third Monday would actually allow the Board to review the application two weeks earlier into the timeline.

The Board was open to moving the monthly meeting to the third Monday of each month, as long as the change would not interfere with the 60-review period for land use applications.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that there will be an open house at City Hall in the Council Chambers this Thursday at 5:30 p.m., prior to the 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission meeting, to discuss Fire Station #2 and a concept plan for a residential development on the former municipal site.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
City Planner

ATTEST:

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JoAnn Shaw  
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*